

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

ENGLISH NATION.

Tuesday, June 25. 1706.

I Never lov'd to tell a Story twice, both because I would not tyre my Readers, nor my self—But as my Observations upon the *Play-house* coming in by way of Collection for the Use of the *Church*, have made some noise in the World, and being very unwilling to go on in any thing I cannot justify, I thought I could make no better Satisfaction to those Gentlemen that may think they have any Share in the Story, than to give one Turn more to it; being always ready to make Acknowledgments, where I find any Cause for it.

Since therefore, the World has been pleas'd to mob my last *Review* upon this Subject about Streets, under the Title of my *Sermon*, they may call this my Recantation Sermon, if they please, or any thing else, it is all one.

In short, I do find a most unjust Reflection is rais'd upon some Gentlemen by the Consequence of this matter, who, for ought I see, are wholly innocent; and that is upon the honest Inhabitants of the large Parish of *St. Martins in the Fields*; as if they either were not able, or which is worse, not willing to contribute to the re-edifying an old *Meeting-house*, and make a *Church* of it.

And to clear them of this Scandal, another unhappy Truth, they say, is a coming to light, viz. That a general Collection for this purpose was made, that her Majesty was pleas'd to give 100 *l.* towards it, and that the Reverend Dr. L——— told the People so for their Encouragement; and that after this, the Reverend Mr. Y—— Curate of *St. Martins*, went about from House

House to House for the voluntary Gifts of the People ; and that several Gentlemen of Quality, not excluding the devout Women, contributed largely to the Work ; and how it should come, that all this should not be sufficient to pay 650 l. which we are inform'd is the utmost Charge of the thing, is very hard to conclude, and what no body enclines to believe.

It being then more than probable, that Money enough was collected or easily might be for this Affair, the Inhabitants of the Parish must needs stand clear of the Reproach, of thus setting the *Church* to raise Contributions upon the *Play-house*.

But in pursuing this, the Author hopes, no body would be so unkind to him to draw him into a snare ; as if this Paper was a design upon the Gentlemen that collected the Money, to examine how they have dispos'd of it—No, no, Gentlemen, I make no doubt, but you have apply'd the Money ; — *Apply'd the Money!* Says one, what a malicious Insinuation's that, what does this Fellow mean, will he make Thieves of us ? No, no, Gentlemen, not Thieves, only *Church-wardens!* I hope; there's nothing synonymous in the Expression—I hope you are all very honest, and that the Parish will take care to keep you so.

As to the Parish therefore, I desire to be understood, to clear them entirely, and am verily perswaded, that they either did contribute sufficient for this work, or would have made good the Deficiency upon a fresh Application—And I cannot but think, now I have done them so much voluntary Justice, they ought in the next place to do themselves so much Justice, as to let us know, who these *Church-Hussars* were, that went a free booting upon the poor *Play-house*.

It is not fair, they say, *to laugh twice at one Jest*—But who can help it? to see the *Play-house* levy Money for the *Church!* pray let us examine the Circumstances a little, and see whether this is not really a Banter upon the *Play-house* too; that they should pretend to contribute to the Necessities of the *Church*, that cannot keep their own Edifices in Repair.

Again, if the *Play-house* is so addicted to Acts of Charity, why do they not maintain their own poor? why not raise a Pension for the

poor Brethren at the *Hay-market?* or which would be something to their Honour, make good the Subscriptions that are yet unpaid, and discharge the Debt to the poor Workmen that built the House?

Thus *Play-house* Charity is set with the bottom upward; like a famous dignified Gentleman in *England*, who ran in Debt to honest Men to give Alms to Knaves—Perhaps it may be said, the Actors are not a Corporation, and have nothing to do with one another; unless it be to help starve one another—Well, but Gentlemen, tho' you are not a Corporation, you are a Fraternity, and as the Devil's Broker said to Dr. *Griffith*, you are all of a Trade, you are all the Devil's Brokers, and you ought in common Prudence, and to support the Honour of the Employment, to have releiv'd your Brethren first, and have clear'd our Prisons of some of the best of them.

Besides, I am at a Loss for the Connexion of the thing; where's the Coherence here, the *Play-house*, and the *Church!* bless us all, there's no manner of Philosophy in it; 'tis *Taking the Poles*, 'tis a Wedding between two *Antipodes*, 'tis *Azure* upon *Blue*, 'tis *North* and by *South*, 'tis saying the *Christ-Cross-Row* backward—And no body can tell whether it be to raise the Devil, or to lay him; There could not have been such a Circle full of *Angles* put together again, and all the Men of Wit, either in GOD's Church or the Devil's Chappel, could not have compos'd such another Piece of Discord; no body knows what to make on't, nor what to say for it.

Some People have been rumageing their Heads for the Design of it; for they say, there must be something extraordinary intended—Now *tho' 'tis true*, sometimes as wonderful things as these are brought to pass, when a Complication of Follies meet together, without the Agency of the least Meaning, as *Epicurus's servitious Atoms*, which they say, form'd the World; and so this great Affair may be laudably suppos'd to have jump'd into the World—yet I can see no need for so wild a Guess: He that shot this Gun, took Aim no doubt; and what did he aim at think you? Why THE MONEY, Man! what should he aim at? and whoever he was, whether Actor, or
Church-

Church-warden, or a *Rump* of both, form'd into a *Functo* for this weighty Affair; my Life for yours, THE MONEY was the Matter!

The Player, I allow, had the best Prospect of the two; for without doubt he had a clear Thought; As first, a *full House*, that's an united Benefit. 2. A *Snack* with the Club, there's private Interest, a new Reputation for Loyalty to the Church, securing a Friend in time of need, and a Skreen from Justice; because one good Turn deserves another.

But what shall we say to Mr. *Church-warden*? he must be a rare Fellow that can bring him off; he must certainly be some *Phanatick*, or some very *low, low, low Church-Man*, that contriv'd this thing to expose the *Church*, and pretend to bring her into a Confederacy with Hell, to support her dying *High-Church* Cause.

Again, some say, this is a *Low-Church* Plot upon the *High-Church Play-house*, and a pretty Banter this makes indeed; for the *Hay-marker*-Building, they say, is a *Low-Church Play-house*, and *Drury-Lane*, they say, is a *High Church Play-House*.

Two things are concluded from hence. 1. That the High Gentlemen are the best Friends to the Church of England; for when did ever the *Low-Church* Players offer to give the *Church* a Day at the *House*?—'Tis really very kindly done, and their Care of the *Church* is very remarkable, and merits to be recorded.

2. It necessarily follows, that the *Church* is very much beholden to the *Play-house*, that they will give away their Profits to its Assistance.

It remains here to make a brief Enquiry of this matter, viz. If the *Play-house*, upon a happy Concourse, should raise a Sum considerable enough to pay this Charge, which by the way some People say is paid already, and have a Sum left, to whom must that Sum go? 'tis plain, 'tis given to discharge the Repairs, to employ it to any other purpose, would be to wrong the Donor, and be a kind of Sacrilege.—But if I may give my Opinion, it should be apply'd to pull down the *Play-house*, and I undertake to prove, that this is employing the Money to the true Use design'd by the Donors.

'Tis plain, this Money is not given for seeing a Play; for then, if Mr. ——— should chance to preach, they might as well have gone to *Church*.—But the Money is given on the Consideration of building and repairing the *Church*.—Now, if I may be allow'd to speak figuratively, I know nothing can contribute more to the building, repairing, and adorning the *Church of England*, than pulling down the *Play-houses*.

We talk of reforming our Manners, and setting up Rules of Government; But to attempt it this way, seems to me to make a Comedy of the Government, and a Tragedy of the *Church*; how odd a Sight would it be to see this Farce acted upon our Stage! and how strange would it be to see Bills put up thus,

At the Theatre Royal in *Drury-Lane*, this present *Thursday* being the 27th of *June*, will be acted a new Play Entitled, THE CHURCH; a Tragedy.

This I think is certain, let the Play be what it will; let it be *Farce*, *Comedy*, *Opera*, or any thing, 'tis a Tragedy to the *Church*—and one of the shortest ways to pull her down, when the People shall once be prevail'd upon to think their going to the Play, join'd to their Duty to God.

What horrid work is here made of Religion, the sacred Mask has been a Disguise to many Hypocrites, but never was put upon the Face of the *Play-house* before—I cannot deny it to be a very quaint Invention to persuade People, and a cunning Turn to fill the *House*; that they might go to the Play for God-sake—Our Children would now have a fair Excuse to us, when we refuse them leave to go to the Play—Why, Sir, 'tis for the Benefit of the *Church* I do it, for my Money is to be given to build up the *Church*—Excellent Excuse, Child! Should I say—So you must go lay out your Money with the Devil, that he may build God—Allmighty a House with it—Sacrifice to Vanity for the Encouragement of Piety. Rare Work indeed!

To conclude this melancholy Jest; for if we were to talk seriously of it, the Reflection would be sad enough; if the Concourse to the Play is so great, that they can afford every now and then to give a Day

Day away; one time for Mr. B—another for Mr. A—and now for the Church; I think it might be better consider'd of, and let them once a Week give a Day to the Publick, for the Use of the War —

And this Thought is capable of great Improvements: for why should not all our Vices be equally Tax'd: it is the boast of the *English* Nation that our Luxury pays our Taxes; that all the Publick Moneys are raised upon the General Extravagancies — Thus our Smoak pays 100000*l.* per Annum for Tobacco: our Mob-Drunkenness pays in the Excise, or modish Drunkeness in the Customs on Wine: our Pride is tax'd in the Silk, and every Top Knot payes to the War: our Habits pay Customs upon *India* Goods and Linen: our Whoring, I think needs it not, being generally its own Tax in an Hospital—why then should not our Play-houfes contribute to the same general Good?

This would be to set one Devil up against another; make Vice help to pull down Tyranny; and perhaps the Civil War between them might in the End pull them down both.

ADVERTISEMENT S.

THE Gentleman that sent the Author of this a Composition of Musick, on the Subject of the late Victories, and desir'd some Words to it, is request'd to leave Word at Mr. Matthews in *Little-Brittain*, how he may be sent to.

Just publish'd,

A Geographical and Historical Account of the Principality of *Catalonia*, and Earldom of *Barcelona*. Containing the Description of that Country and City, and of all other Places of Note, and its Principal Rivers the Succession of its Princes, and all Notable Revolutions from the first Ages, to this present time.

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D^E Laune's Plea for the Non-Conformists: Shewing the true State of their Case, and how far the Conformist's Separation from the Church of *Rome* for their Po-

pish Superstitions, &c. introduced into the Service of God, justifies the Non-Conformist's Separation from them. In a Letter to Dr. *Benjamin Calamy*, on his Sermon called, *Scrupulous Conscience*, inviting hereto. To which is added, A Parallel Scheme of the Pagan, Papal, and Christian Rites and Ceremonies. With a Narrative of the Sufferings underwent for Writing, Printing and Publishing hereof. By *Thomas Delaune*, who died in Newgate during his Imprisonment for this Book: Printed twenty Years ago; but being seiz'd by the Messenger of the Press, was afterwards burnt by the Hangman: And now re-printed from the Author's original Copy. With a Preface by the Author of the Review. London, Printed for, and Sold by *William and Joseph Marbal*, at the Bible in *Newgate-street*. 1706.

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